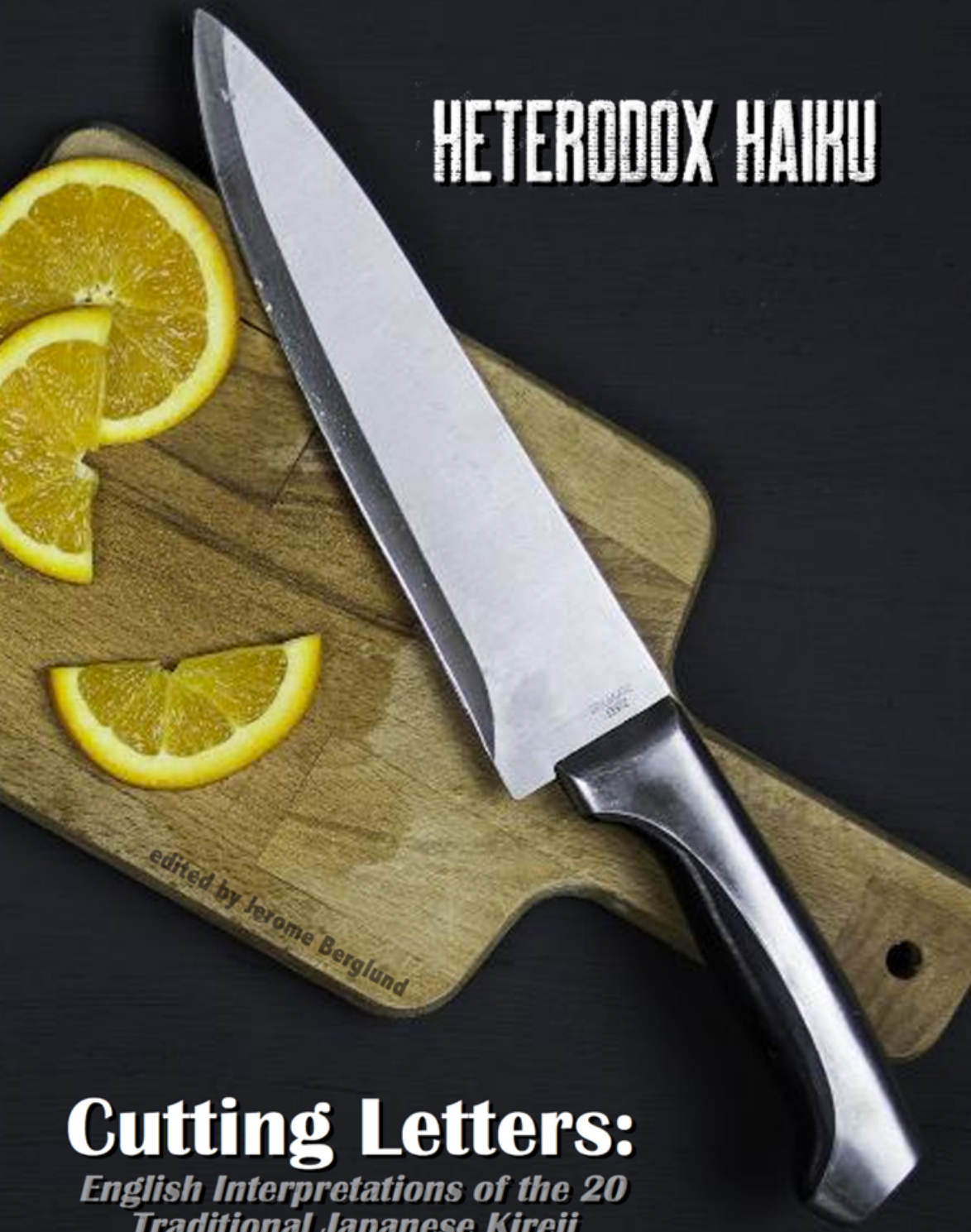


HETERODOX HAIKU



Cutting Letters:

*English Interpretations of the 20
Traditional Japanese Kireji*

Heterodox Haiku

Journal

in association with

NUN PROPHET PRESS

presents:

Cutting Letters:

*English Interpretations of the 20
Traditional Japanese Kireji*

An Anthology

edited by Jerome Berglund

Spring 2024

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priced at cost with no royalties generated from its purchasing.*

HETERODOX HAIKU JOURNAL

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ISBN: 9798324837419

Logo Design by petro c.k.

Edited by Jerome Berglund.

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For more information on kireji and cutting see:

Modern Japanese Haiku by Makoto Ueda

The Haiku Handbook by William J. Higginson

'Kireji' at [en.wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kireji)

'Kireji' at [fr.wikipedia](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kireji)

'Kireji and toriawase' at World Kigo Database

'What the Heck Are Kireji' at the Haiku Experiment

'Punctuation in Haiku' at Graceguts



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These headings, along with rough definitions and extrapolations to follow, represent the culmination of a hasty, cursory research, attempts at deep diving which yielded conspicuous lack of comprehensive details to be discovered by a layman who frequently conflates elbow with donkey, doesn't read a lick of Japanese, without convenient access to print references or direction from any handy authorities. Errors and glaring mistakes are most certainly present, and we implore forgiveness of, as ambassadors and exchange students making a thoughtful and enthusiastic pilgrimage into exploring new territories in the dark of night using a cell phone flashlight. Direct printed books are easily revised and we hope this volume is of some lasting utility and interest to students and practitioners, so if any more knowledgeable experts observe obviously incorrect information, are able to flesh out and clarify concepts or finer points (say, between the different imperatives) please don't hesitate to reach out and we may be able to update the manuscript accordingly to the best of our abilities. Thank you for your time and interest!



Calling cut...

*Business casual's
a-okay, but there's nothing
wrong with dressing up!*

Jerome Berglund

In *English Language Haiku*, punctuation is predominantly silent, but **not this once!** It's true that formlessness and ambiguity represent double-edged swords, on one hand while omitting to overtly and explicitly specify full stops, pauses, exclamations or trailing off a writer may indeed augment the *mystique* of a verse, bolster its flexibility and *ma* (or 'dreaming room'), provide greater, more accommodating space with which to 'complete the poem' as critics say, fill in those blanks in readers' ripe imaginations. But when one approaches the classic works of haiku's masters in their native Japanese – or *transliterated into Roman characters* – they swiftly discover that *how* and *why* different **kireji** caesura markers were deftly employed, quite precisely and intentionally, often proved a pivotal, key factor in crafting their unforgettable, iconic oeuvres and the countless sleek, meticulously wrought links which makes up discrete bodies of work. As we investigate in brief the 20 time-honored Japanese *kireji* 'cutting words' (or '**letters**', it's been argued is a more correct translation) and modes via which they may be inventively exploited and invoked in our language, I hope practitioners will be spurred to reevaluate some assumptions which have been ratified prematurely or erroneously, ultimately cordoning off many valuable avenues of possibility which are entirely legitimate and spectacularly promising, as examples throughout antiquity from Basho on down to our international contributors make a compelling argument for including in our personal short form toolboxes.

Beyond those full and partial stops, exclamations, past and future tenses, most pertinently the frequent appearance of **second person**, commands, imperatives in native *haikai* micropoetry one may readily distinguish is something far rarer to accepted English practice. That a full quarter (counting **yo**) of these cutting devices utilize some form of interactive address to the audience or subject further calls into question prevailing beliefs about supposed inappropriateness in didactic content, moralizing or breaking that proverbial '**fourth wall**', introducing reflexive and conversational elements into modern English Language Haiku. The most identifiable style of juxtaposition we recognize in orthodox applications of Eastern-inspired poetasting generally functions akin to the *kireji* '**ya**' which cleanly separates into two distinct portions our conventional phrase and fragment. But that represents merely one out of twenty eclectic and intriguing options we can benefit enormously from familiarizing ourselves with the strengths, features and unique capabilities of. Among the most popular punctuations is the question mark. This is common enough in our language, yet the other most widespread, varied and gradated exclamations, '**kana**', '**kamo**', '**ikani**', '**yo**' and '**keri**', staples in haiku's homeland, are much less confidently deployed or exhibited in our contemporary arena, which is a serious tragedy considering their popularity and potency in *meiku* of Basho and company. Matsuo, in his fairly compact collected folio of legendary material, used the equivalent of an **!** literally hundreds of times.¹ And in fact, that a number of these *kireji* communicate very particular, subtle degrees between emphasis and astonishment cause a person to better understand those Japanese aficionados who've vociferously lamented important facets of the original poems which are sacrificed to achieve our '*minimalist*', vague and nebulous brand of translations prevailing popular opinion dictates, at times quite pedantically demands.

¹ This is not hyperbole! See '*Matsuo Bashō's haiku poems in romanized Japanese with English translations*' edited by Gábor Terebess of Hungary. In the thousand or so verses to his name a rough skimming counted what appeared to be over 200 apparent usages of the **kana** *kireji*, meaning upwards of 20% of godfather's cumulative body of work, to Japanese readers, was received entailing an exclamation point! 🤔

No one is expecting to reinvent the wheel, or fix something not broken so much as getting on the bald side, with this showcase formulated in the style demonstrated by Makoto Ueda in his seminal tour de force **Modern Japanese Haiku**, arguably most effective at capturing or articulating the specifics and nuances, expressing core mechanics of *kireji* in Japanese verses, so we may best appreciate them in English. But I *would* be overjoyed to expand our mindset, and gently nudge some paradigms just a scooch, because as you'll see within these neglected and excluded instruments are ripe for application in our tongue, and posterity will benefit from their incorporating into individual wheelhouses, bringing western micropoetry into closer alignment and agreement, rapport and synergy, accord and harmony with the *haiku* and *senryu* of Japan, from the purist flourishes of its halcyon golden ages to the thrilling flairs of *gendai* innovation characteristic of the **New Style** and **Proletarian Haiku** movements which defined the philosophic zeitgeist of recent generations. Like so many things taken for granted today, too frequently 'appeals to common practice' are cited as sufficient justifications to validate a middling status quo. Nonetheless, just because a process has been done a certain way since time immemorial does not mean that is the only, or necessarily best means to accomplish an objective. I implore you to examine each purported rule espoused thoughtfully, and evaluate it critically. Many choices will be corroborated by history and a firm foundation of logic. Others may be flawed and counterproductive, limiting or even stifling. Just as relegation of **headnotes** (a cousin of titling), allegorical and allusive components from our English tradition severely hampers prospective output, so does relinquishing seventeen of the twenty *kireji* at our disposal significantly restrict *haijin's* opportunities and potential. Spend some time with each of these cutting letters, peruse referred analyses and discussions, study up on eloquent anglicizing of classical examples of different **kire** (or 'cuts') by extraordinary translators like Jane Reichhold. Then, when you envision your 'base' and 'superimposed' sections, *DARE* to look beyond the most comfortable two or three mechanisms of slicing and dicing! These methods are perfectly valid, if someone tells you they're not send them a dozen poems by Basho to support your case.² For too long ELH has been confined to cramped quarters, sealed in a lonely reductionist box bordering upon the sepulchral. But as we bask in the Spring without, let us channel its illuminating warmth and find hope by reframing this outcome as a chrysalis. Something winged is ready to emerge. We must allow it to find its way without interfering, *but that does not mean one cannot cheer it enthusiastically forward!!*

² They just * love * it when you do *that*, see ahead... 😂

Disclaimer

This anthology has been curated by someone relatively new to the discipline of *haikai*, described by certain personages as a ‘SELF-ASSURED ARSEHOLE’ who ‘NEEDS TO READ MORE’ theory, has often incensed folks for irresponsibly ‘THROWING AROUND JAPANESE TERMS’. These allegations are warranted enough, and while unrepentant, I highly encourage readers to seek out qualified, accredited sources — *see listings on the copyright page* — who have discussed these topics, ideas and concepts more knowledgeably with greater exactitude and depth across the vast body of criticism related to Asian poetics, much of which is available online, and more in print, through resources such as the **Haiku Foundation**, **Graceguts**, in essays and commentary about the pages of fine publications like *Fireflies’ Light*, *Frogpond*, *Haiku Canada*, *Pan Haiku Review*, *Presence*, *Ribbons*, *Seashores*, *tsuri-dōrō* and *Wales Haiku Journal*—not to mention the informative monthly mailings which represent but one valuable benefit of membership (available domestically and internationally) to the **Haiku Society of America**. The perspectives and opinions, conclusions and assertions espoused herein are my own, just one enthusiastic novice *haijin* and aspiring scholar, admittedly possessing a limited exposure to the troves of classical verses out there, a fraction of which have made the journey to my own from a native language I am not fluent in. A grain of salt is recommended, nay always crucial.

*Just some git!
Mistrust me, much as
everyone else.*

...yes?

ka

...no?

The Kireji of INQUIRY?



EMPHASIZES, INDICATES TO BE RHETORICAL QUESTION RATHER THAN STATEMENT.

...right?

か

...isn't
it?

か

Sorting hat,
do I belong
anywhere?

Kimberly Kuchar
Texas

My cake:
why would everyone eat
before me?

Biswajit Mishra
Alberta

Missile after missile...
...which god feeds on blood?

Vipanjeet Kaur
India

Weighed down
with peach blossom pollen –
how does she fly?

Nancy Brady
Ohio

Clay fingers:
what do they need to be?

Luke Brannon
Washington

Parsley
in the walls,
heaven knows why?

C. X. Turner
England

Feel a stranger?
Sunset reveals shadows
of skyscrapers.

Aaron Bowker
New York

Do we understand each other?
A tiercel landing catches the eye.

Herb Tate
Jersey

ka



Dog days of summer...
chasing fireflies in backyard
forty years ago?

Veronica Hosking

Arizona

Downy woodpecker:
is that his spirit tapping
on the window?

Amoolya Kamalnath

India

When did I
いつからか
stop singing that
私の歌う
happy tune?
終わったの？

Lydia Derby

Ohio

In fixed form haiku, kireji most commonly appear after fifth or twelfth syllable in seventeen unit poems, equivalent to third or eighth for more compact eleven syllable framework constraints many English practitioners work within. Basho posited all 48 mora of the Japanese alphabet may be used for cutting.



Oh!

Ah!

kana

The Kireji of EXCLAMATION!



**INDICATES WONDER ABOUT OBJECT, SCENE, OR EVENT.
USED WITH FORMAL LANGUAGE.**

What!

かな

Alas!

かな

Horses bolted!
Echo of hooves
from ancient streets.

Sarah Das Gupta
England

Brooding cicadas,
hurry before it's too late –
their trembling bodies!

Geoffrey Philp
Florida

The white butterflies
that devoured last year's roses –
already returning!

Kathy Watts
California

Wondering the significance of how each image pairing relates to different kireji? Like memes? Pop on over to the Heterodox Haiku twitter and check out the prompt threads which inspired these responses to find out!

Winter clothes
put away too early
each year again!

Mueder Krieger
Germany

Leaf litter...
in the grass a daisy
from an Easter bonnet!

Adele Evershed
Connecticut

Through the screen door
a kitten's discovery:
crane flies!

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui
Arizona

kana



Kingfisher! Depths of blue I can deal with.

John Hawkhead
England

Sunrise!
Finally the road
goes through a town.

C. Jean Downer
British Columbia

Squirrel leads me across the flowers: yellow, yellow, yellow!

Jerome Berglund
Minnesota

For more information about this
cutting word see 'KANA' by Michael
Dylan Welch at ***Graceguts***.



!!

How!?

ikani

The Kireji of ASTONISHMENT!!



EMPHASIZES PHENOMENON & INDICATES EMOTIONAL SHOCK, SURPRISE, OR STRONG ASTONISHMENT.

...?

いかに

- !!

いかに

Screaming love!? Tennis match.

Kimberly A. Horning
Florida

An injured animal
cries in the night;
how can I save him?!

Lafcadio
Tennessee

Tom Sawyer?
The white-washed trees
of winter.

Susan Burch
Maryland

And but so then?!
Prepared for anything
but tomorrow...

Herb Tate
Jersey

ikani

In English the cutting word IKANI
translates to '*how?*', '*in what way?*',
'*how much?*', '*to what extent?*'





ya



The Kireji of Juxtaposition –



CUTS INTO 2 PARTS INVITING READER TO EXPLORE
THEIR RELATIONSHIP, COMPARE & CONTRAST.





Spring morning
alone at the platform...
with bird songs.

Mueder Krieger
Germany

Junco in the rain
so busy, I gather
my flannel.

Curt Linderman
Washington

Yutori:
the stream ripples
– a flurry of koi.

Katherine E. Winnick
England

Sunset silhouettes –
boys jump prance dive off the pier,
goad and dare their mates.

D.C. Nobes
Indonesia

Salty turtle tears . . .
the butterflies
drink their fill.

Kimberly Kuchar
Texas

Another day in bed...
cherry blossoms
outside my window.

Isabella Mori
British Columbia

Watching stars
around the beach fire...
dying embers.

John Hawkhead
England

A seasonless wind
scuffs up skeleton thistleseed:
Ecopoetics.

Kathryn Reese
Australia

ya



Grading
without commenting.
April showers.

Alex Fyffe
Texas

Next to the amusement park: Thasker's caskets.

Susan Burch
Maryland

System fails –
one minute later
train arrives.

Tim Poe
Ontario

Louis Vuitton bag ~
carrying the surgical drain
to the restroom.

Amoolya Kamalnath
India

Dappled light
paints the lane...
the doe pauses.

JL Huffman
North Carolina

White deer in forest
hears the hunter taking aim,
then gun implodes.

Strider Marcus Jones
England

Haymakers
landed in the yard –
knock out roses.

Leon Tefft
South Carolina

The shape
of everything:
clouds.

Roberta Beach Jacobson
Iowa



Likened to word 'AND'. *'Gives a sense of suspension, like an ellipsis...'* Higginson notes. Says Ueda: *'like a colon: since there is usually an implied equation between parts'*. YA typically appears mid-poem. Some contend employing punctuation marks as cutting devices in ELH equates **only** to the Japanese usage of this kireji.



had
eaten

keri

? !

The Kireji of NOSTALGIA!?



DESIGNATES A PAST, COMPLETED ACTION, AND
EXPRESSES A STRONG FEELING OF EMOTION,
ADMIRATION, OR SUDDEN AWARENESS.

!?

けり

has
happened

けり

Night train whistle –
has not yet reached
any destination.

Hege A. Jakobsen Lepri
Norway

Blossom
drifting
down
the
refugee
road.

John Hawkhead
England

As if in the wood,
there were words attached –
the streets of song birds.

Robert Frede Kenter
Ontario

Cameilla flowers
painted on the pink cheeks of
a child prostitute.

Lydia Derby
Ohio

A dream deferred . . .
fluorescent hum
in B flat.

petro c.k.
Washington

Only memories
had been taken;
twilight sky.

C. Jean Downer
British Columbia

Curtains have billowed
in the cool swirling sea breeze –
watched the ships slide by.

D.C. Nobes
Indonesia

keri



KERI cuts meaning
more strongly than KANA.



Egad!

I do declare!

kamo

The Kireji of YORE!



**EXPRESSES STRONG FEELING
IN A VINTAGE MANNER.**

Well I
never!

かも

Balder
dash!

かも

Gullywasher!
The pings from pots
filling up.

Eavonka Ettinger
California

Fifty year old:
memories of
pepper gas.

Kathy Watts
California

Misfit mist and moon...
her porcelain complexion
imitating snow.

Strider Marcus Jones
England

Gin!
She sets down her cards
& rattles her glass.

Curt Linderman
Washington

Oil palm trees
realign the canopy!
Gibbons look to us.

James Penha
Indonesia

Geese v-ing across the sky — so long!

Jianqing Zheng
Mississippi

Along
whitewashed steps:
pomegranates.

Roberta Beach Jacobson
Iowa

kamo



KAMO is a foundational kireji,
which in the Heian period
transformed into KANA.



it might.

it could.

ramu/ran

The Kireji of SPECULATION



INDICATES PROBABILITY, AN OBSERVATION
OR CONJECTURE IN FACE OF PRESENT SCENE.

it must.

らむ/らん

it may
be.

らむ/らん

All the weather apps
calling for rain
and it may be.

Kathy Watts
California

Cloudless skies...
I am a red-tail hawk
in my dreams.

Nancy Brady
Ohio

Must be autumn...
Forests of fire,
landscape aflame.

Sarah Das Gupta
England

Morning rain off and on a mockingbird.

Jianqing Zheng
Mississippi

ramu/ran



Karkoski, at ***The Haiku Experiment***, explains that RAN, like its close sibling RAMU, is a *'speculation...about why something is now happening...a euphemism for reporting hearsay information,'* adding: *'Japanese has no future tense, rather they skirt around it by using the simple present or by attaching a speculative **'perhaps'** on the end of sentences to indicate that it is an action they are not 100% sure is happening.'*



is x.

am x.

nari

The Kireji of TO BE



EXPRESSES, ARTICULATES, CLARIFIES
COMMUNICATED FEELINGS.

are x.

なり

was x.

なり

Somewhere
the hour is late;
meridian crossing.

Herb Tate
Jersey

The wind blows,
as grass sways in dance –
is cut down.

Tim Poe
Ontario

Darkness inside box,
a universe without stars.
We are all alone.

Strider Marcus Jones
England

It's just images
racing on mental canvas,
sometimes that is all.

Unicycle Steve
Texas

The clouds swirl about
the full moon above the rocks—
it's only a dream.

J. D. Nelson
Colorado

Nightclub — fizzing bottles — girls' beer kiss.

Jianqing Zheng
Mississippi

Bees are busy.
Pollen clings.
Sweet tea is brewing.

Marjorie Pezzoli
California

A dewdrop —
even so small is bending
the leaf.

Nitu Yumnam
India

nari



* Doesn't need to reference a human or the narrator, necessarily, either. Shiki, for example, applied NARI to describe character of the sea! <3



...I will
not.

じ

...are
unnecessary.

The Kireji of DISCOURAGING



THROUGH USE OF NEGATIVE EXPRESSES
UNCERTAINTY, NON-DESIRE, OR NON-INTENTION;
INDICATES SPECULATION AND CONVEYS
WILL OR VOLITION.

...have no
need for.

じ

...without
x.



“Not this, not that...”
and yet they still come
cherry blossoms.

Frank J. Tassone
New York

Roof not needed:
rolling on
a southern wind.

Aaron Bowker
New York

Without the snails:
I would have
beautiful blooms.

Melissa Dennison
England

God particle...
the mote in His eye
dwindles.

Pippa Phillips
Missouri

Morning traffic:
tamping down
this river of dreams.

Luke Brannon
Washington

No firewood
on the old man's back.
Cornstalks.

Christina Chin
Malaysia



ji

Empty safebox:
I have no need
for protection.

Viabel Oluwatosin
Nigeria

Aunt at ninety-nine
sighs to say another year...
is just not needed.

James Penha
Indonesia

With me, without me – tulips.

Lafcadio
Tennessee

A *future negative* which
through conjugating makes the
entire statement untrue.

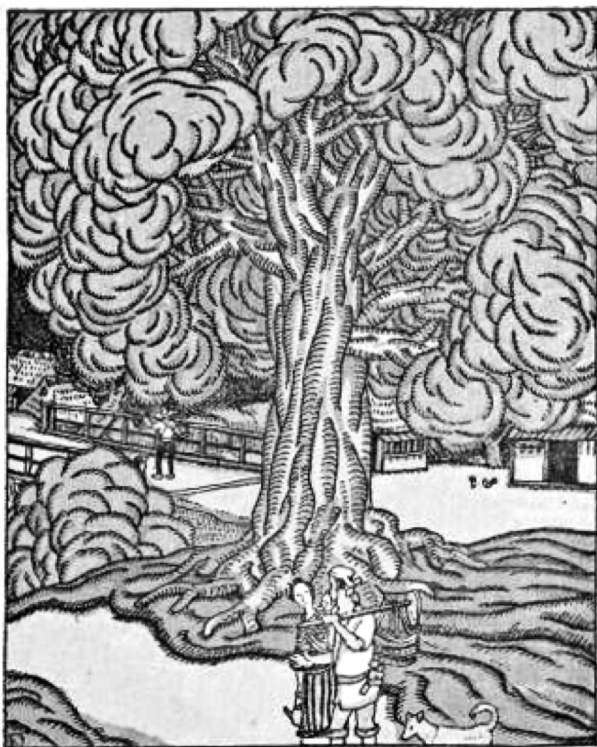


on a stormy
morning

shi

...yearn deeply.

The Kireji of -Y



**MODIFIES OR DESCRIBES SUBJECT,
INFLECTS AND INSTILLS MEANING.**

Nothing is
scanty here.

し

...suddenly
return.



Rapidly rising water
in the cellar –
summer deluge.

Nancy Brady
Ohio

Crying jacaranda –
the pavement slippery
with honey and tears.

Kathryn Reese
Australia

Voices in his head deathly quiet after the fall . . .

petro c.k.
Washington

The fall
of another puffling...
mistaken moon.

C.X. Turner
England

Boxing myself in
my own arms
lovingly.

Luke Brannon
Washington

Grassy stains,
ice cream drips...
ecstasy and laundry.

Marjorie Pezzoli
California

shi



Returning with
stringer heavy:
after sunset.

Jerome Berglund
Minnesota

Bluebell fields,
sheep grazing
peacefully.

Nicola Schaum
England

Where are these blossoms?
Blended with rain in the gale;
cuffing us sweetly.

Will Griffith
England

The Spanish word for '**and**' is written
'**y**' and pronounced '**ee!**'. In English
equivalences translated from classical
examples SHI can be observed modifying
via both adjectives and adverbs.

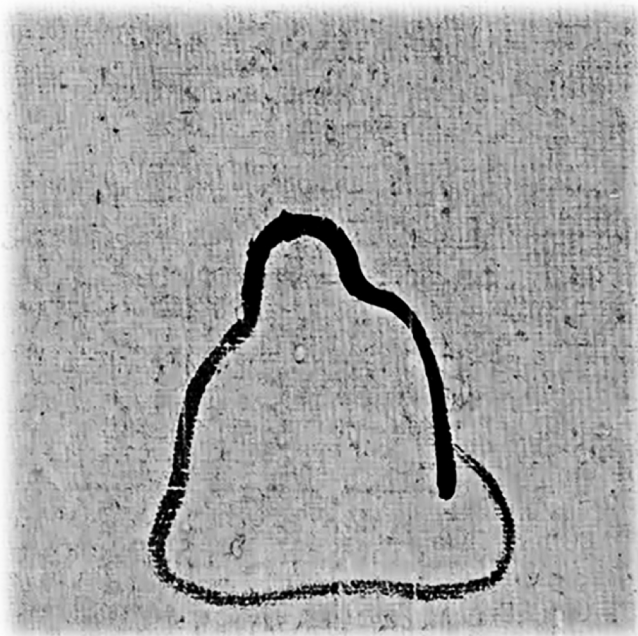


has been
prepared.

tsu

...has come.

The Kireji of WHAT HAS BEEN



INDICATES MOVEMENT COMPLETED,
CERTAINTY OF ACTION BEING REALIZED,
THAT 2 THINGS FOLLOW EACH OTHER
OR OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY.

It's been
compared.



...having planted
a banana tree.



Since yesterday...
the buds on the tree
have lengthened.

Melissa Dennison
England

Having washed my hands –
a tiny fly
floating in my tea.

Mark Gilbert
England

Burnout – last of the spaghetti has boiled dry.

Nicola Schaum
England

Child bearing years,
somehow they are gone... It has
become all yearning.

Emma Datson

Australia

Eclipse week ~
the astrologer has
made a killing.

Jahnvi Gogoi

Ontario

What has been
has already been –
recyclables.

Biswajit Mishra

Alberta

tsu



Horizontal rain...
the mime's umbrella
has flown away!

C. Jean Downer
British Columbia

Lightning storm –
charred remains of a once tall
cypress tree.

Aaron Bowker
New York

Fowey lifeboat has docked,
the sound of fish in hot oil
drowned out by shanties.

Will Griffith
England

Compared to other kireji it is less
uncommon for TSU to cut outside
standard metrical line breaking points.



! ?

ZO

more reliable,
a world of change!

The Kireji of CONVICTION



**ADDS EMOTIONAL COLORING AND EMPHASIS,
MODIFIES MEANING WHILE CUTTING.**

I wonder?
Lasting how
long?

ぞ

Autumn's
deepening now...
Without mother!



White noise...
is there no star
in the sky?

Viabel Oluwatosin
Nigeria

The snow is heavy.
My neighbor is very old...
Should I help shovel?

Tim Poe
Ontario

Mother's tears,
the mobile soothes
without child.

Nicola Schaum
England

Saltwind . . . can it really be called a lake anymore?

petro c.k.
Washington

This soil,
soaked like an old drunk!
April showers...

Mark Gilbert
England

For how long
one can resist
love and cheesecake...

Sarang Bhand
India

Fragrance
of sun-dried sheets...
Butterflies.

Christina Chin
Malaysia

ZO may be used in generation interjection or as a question, for more information on this cutting word see '*the Kireji of Conviction*' by James Karkoski at ***The Haiku Experiment***.



...if only!

mogana

...I wish!

The Kireji of DESIRE



INDICATES HOPE OR WANTING.

may...
...hoping!

もがな

...I would
like!

もがな

The black cat stares out...
on the ledge, longing for the
freedom he once had.

Emma Datson
Australia

If only the hours
had gaps to hide between
these stacks of papers.

Alex Fyffe
Texas

Wind-stripped,
the plum tree sighs
until next year.

Jane Dougherty
France

Ennui –
in daydreams young sweetfish
swim my bloodstream.

Shōnin
Texas

mogana



MOGANA is comparable to
the phrase, '*if only...*'



...have
not...

zu/su

...has not
yet...

The Kireji of NEGATION



CUTS USING A NEGATIVE.

...is there
no...

ず/す

I've
yet...

ず/す

Show's over –
no one wants
to go home.

Eavonka Ettinger
California

The scent of lilies
will always remain.
Winter will not come.

Isabella Mori
British Columbia

Wedding day ~
bridal wear has not been
prepared yet.

Vipanjeet Kaur
India

Lemon blossom –
all the promises
I haven't kept...

Adele Evershed
Connecticut

Forget-me-not:
church mouse
yet to be discovered.

Marjorie Pezzoli
California

The tears
she doesn't explain –
hall pass.

Alex Fyffe
Texas

Not what I had
in mind.
Fugue state.

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui
Arizona

Earthworms
wiggle wriggle... not yet
fish food.

Kimberly A. Horning
Florida

zu/su



A last battle –
the samurai's yoroi
no longer fits him.

Mueder Krieger
Germany

Cannot stay
any longer here
in the dream.

Sarang Bhand
India

Green
envelops the sky—
silence.

Kimberly Kuchar
Texas

Etymologically, the kireji ZU
(letter of Hiragana with the added strokes
at upper right) is considered a
combination of NU and SU.

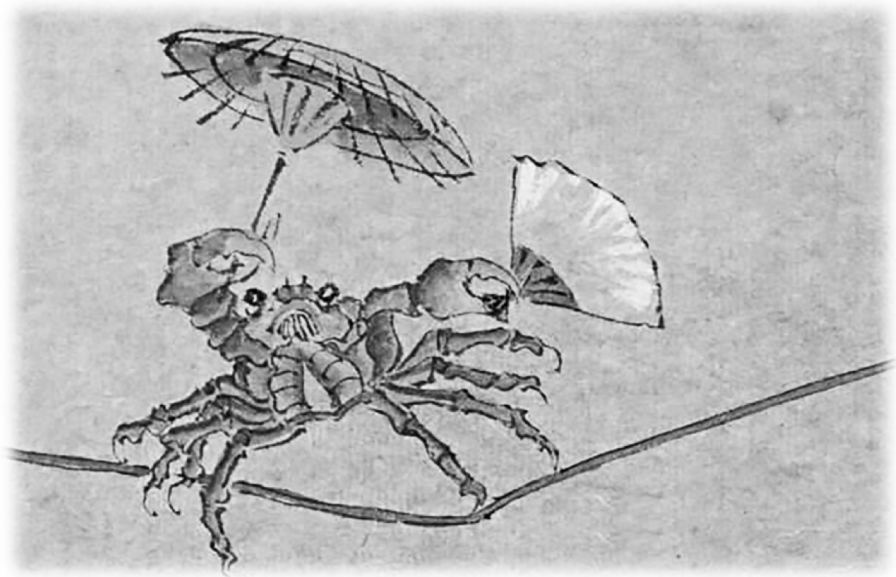


...not
sleeping...

...never
leaving...

nu

The Kireji of COMPLETION/CANCELLING



DEPENDING ON CONTEXT, CAN INDICATE EITHER
NEGATION OR AN ACTION BEING FINISHED.

...conclude
being...

ぬ

...stop
asking...



Idling through forests
past a calm lake.
Reflections appear.

Leon Tefft
South Carolina

Spring break –
a dead dragonfly
steals the show.

Kimberly A. Horning
Florida

In the candlelight
I drink my sad alcohol
as life drips away.

Emma Datson
Australia

Between fucks
not holding hands.

Mark Gilbert
England

Ring the
temple bell...
no god answers.

Jahnavi Gogoi
Ontario

Empty music room...
derelict and abandoned
a silent piano.

D.C. Nobes
Indonesia

The dead wander
grey fields of asphodel –
no paradise, no hell.

Sarah Das Gupta
England

A sad
black wrapp'd hand
that hasn't clapp'd.

Emil Karla
France

nu

Floating dolls...
the closing of another
factory.

Shōnin
Texas

What is left for the ravens?
Sun bleached bones
blend with the limestone road.

Kathryn Reese
Australia

Flapping
on clothesline –
nana's faded quilt.

Roberta Beach Jacobson
Iowa

Karkoski postulates that NU
appears to express the simple past tense,
whereas TSU may be differentiated by its
resembling the modern idioms
of 'while' or 'under way'.

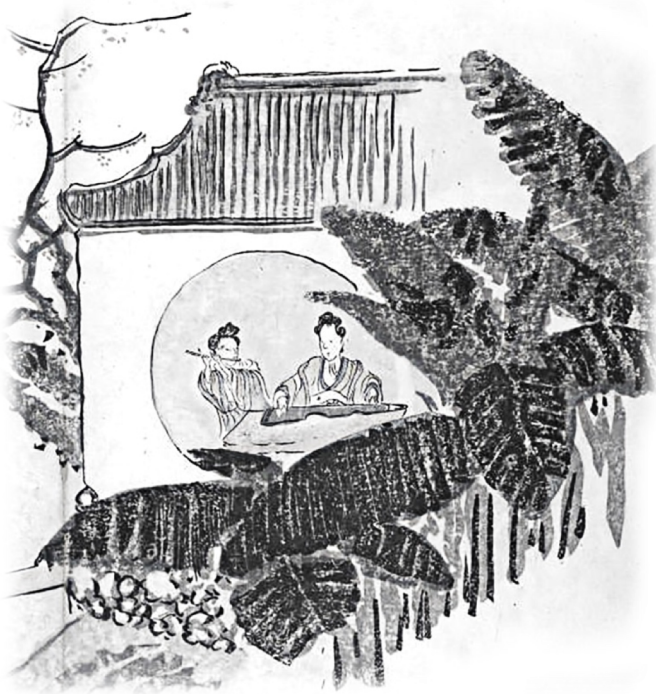


Come
out!

yo

Needs
more!

The Kireji of COLLOQUY



INDICATES EXCLAMATION AS WELL AS CREATES
REQUEST, COMMAND, OR INSTRUCTION.

Turn
it up!

yo

Let me
ask you!



Come and see:
image in mirror
of lost youth.

Sarang Bhand
India

O war wind
...no children!

Nitu Yumnam
India

Just listen...
these birds won't sing
forever.

Hege A. Jakobsen Lepri

Norway

Tarantula!
Stop that
crazy dance.

Curt Linderman

Washington

Winter's chill persists –
take a sip of swellfish broth
to toast time passing!

Will Griffith

England



yo

YO is used in vernacular Japanese
unlike the strictly literary KANA.



Our final 4 kireji, SE, KE, HE, and RE are
known as imperatives or ‘**command
words**’, describing a speaker or the
writer beseeching someone else to
perform an action.

Talk!

se

Tell me!

The Kireji of INSTRUCTION



TURNS INTO GIVING OF INSTRUCTION,
MADE REQUEST, ISSUED WARNING OR COMMAND.

Speak!

世

Spit it
out!



Rustling wind,
spill your secrets already
the day is old.

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui
Arizona

Ants carrying
a small frog's leg;
easy does it!

Eavonka Ettinger
California

Tell me,
illness,
who sent you?

Isabella Mori
British Columbia

Thawed backyard.
Get off my swing
magpie.

Biswajit Mishra
Alberta

O, Spanish Needle
can you tell what ails my heart
in this winter storm?

Geoffrey Philp
Florida

Hush now!
Mother scolds her
hungry children.

Jahnavi Gogoi
Ontario

Moments fleeting...
snatches of sky blue
must you always leave me?

Melissa Dennison
England

River fog...
Stop the moaning
about tree stumps!

Amoolya Kamalnath
India

se

Wildflower
through brutal rains:
rise up!

C.X. Turner
England

Etymologically, the root letter SE has many meanings, including river rapids or a current, the rear of something, one's back or height. In kansai it can mean '*thus*', or '*you're right!*'.



Move!

ke

Make way!

The Kireji of COMMAND



Turns into given command, made request,
issued warning or instruction.

Stand
aside!

け

Clear a
path!

け

Trailer's landing gear –
winch shed into position,
finish grave, mow yard.

Unicycle Steve
Texas

Early bloom,
alas!
Shredded pink plastic.

Hege A. Jakobsen Lepri
Norway

Meeting prolongs
...strong tea to keep
myself awake!

Vipanjeet Kaur
India

Watch out!
Little wobbling feet
at the edge...

Nitu Yumnam
India

Sappho seeing
her lover in a man's arms
sits in yellow grass.

James Penha
Indonesia

Children,
let's blow the chaff!
Winnowing basket.

Christina Chin
Malaysia



ke

A question particle, considered intimate and dialectical, in the Kagoshima dialect, KE can also signify calling **'come!'**



Go
away!

he

Don't go!

The Kireji of WARNING



TURNS INTO GIVEN WARNING, MADE REQUEST,
ISSUED COMMAND OR INSTRUCTION.

Let's go!



Come
here!



Cold April:
sing courtyard blackbird
while I dress.

Emil Karla
France

Come for your band...
Stay for the openers!

Jerome Berglund
Minnesota

Argue with thyself.
Remember, you must never
lose the argument...

Unicycle Steve
Texas

At mid-day, let's go
and gaze at the moon's shadow –
my final eclipse.

Geoffrey Philp
Florida

he

Etymologically,
the root letter HE can also
indicate a destination or moving
toward something.



Get it!

Gimme!

re

The Kireji of REQUEST



Turns into making of request, issued command, given warning or instruction.

Bring
it!

れ

Hand it
over!

れ

Red plums
mark the beginning of
another cycle of aggravation.

Shōnin
Texas

Raindrops
on the stone buddha:
dry his tears.

Lafcadio
Tennessee

‘Join us!’
the clouds call
from the lake...

Adele Evershed
Connecticut

Rainy Sunday.
Stir slowly
the Easter stew...

Emil Karla
France

Through the dark,
a bird cries out and summons
the sunrise.

Lydia Derby
Ohio



re

Etymologically,
the root letter RE can also be
used to describe redoing,
or starting over again.



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